

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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R 070610Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9887
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 7187

CINCPAC: FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINAON AF, IN
SUBJECT: INDIAN AMBASSADOR SHLINDRA KUMAR SINGH MADE THE
FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN
AND PAKISTAN:

A. THE KHALQIST LEADERSHIP AT KABUL IS DANGEROUSLY NARROWING
ITS POLITICAL BASE THROUGH ITS SUCCESSIVE PURGES OF "RIGHTIST"
ELEMENTS. ITS BASE MIGHT BECOME SO NARROW THAT THE RUMP PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA) MIGHT SOON FIND THAT IT
IS CUTT OFF FROM WHATEVER GRASSROOTS SUPPORT IT MIGHT HAVE HAD.

B. THE INDIANS HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THE MODERATING ROLE THE
U.S. HAS PLAYED THROUGHOUT THE UNSTABLE MONTHS FOLLOWING THE APRIL
27 REVOLUTION.

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C. THE INDIANS BELIEVE THAT THE CHINESE MIGHT HAVE BEEN UP TO
MISCHIEF, HOWEVER. THEY THINK THAT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE
PRC MIGHT BE SUPPORTING THE CURRENT INSURRECTION IN BADA KHSHAN
PROVINCE, WHICH BORDERS ON CHINA'S SINKIANG PROVINCE, (SEE KABUL
7093 FOR THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR'S ENIGMATIC COMMENT ABOUT THE
BADA KHSHAN SITUATION.) FURTHERMORE, THE INDIANS "WONDER" WHY
THE CHINESE WERE IN SUCH A HURRY TO DEDICATE THE KARAKORAM

HIGHWAY TO NORTHERN PAKISTAN IN JUNE WHEN THAT ROAD IS "NOT EVEN FINISHED." NEW DELHI IS AWARE OF THE MILITARY POTENTIAL OF THIS ROAD -- AND HAS NOTED THE POLITICAL MILEAGE PEKING IS ALSO EXPLOITING.

D. THE RUSSIANS WOULD PROBABLY BE RELUCTANT TO COME TO THE RESCUE OF THE KHALQIST REGIME AT KABUL, SHOULD THE LATTER FACE A SERIOUS DOMESTIC CHALLENGE OR A BORDER CONFLICT WITH PAKISTAN, BECAUSE THE NATIONALISTIC AFGHANS WOULD UNITE AGAINST RUSSIAN FORCES CROSSING THE OXUS. (HERE THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR IS IN AGREEMENT WITH HIS CHINESE COLLEAGUE: SEE KABUL 7093.)

E. INDIA UNDERSTANDS THE PAKISTANI POSITION ON THE STATUS OF THE DURAND LINE AND REGARDS IT AS AN INTERNATIONAL BORDER.
(COMMENT: INDIA UNDOUBTEDLY SEES A PARALLEL WITH ITS OWN MACMAHON LINE FRONTIER WITH CHINA.)

F. EVEN IF PAKISTAN WERE TO DISINTEGRATE, INDIA WOULD NOT WANT THE SIND OR THE PUNJAB (ASSUMING THAT PUSHTUNISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN WEST OF THE INDUS WOULD GO THEIR OWN WAY OR BE OBASORBED BY AFGHANISTAN). SINGH WAS PRESENT AT A RECENT MEETING BETWEEN INDIAN PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI AND A "PROMINENT" PAKISTANI NEWS CORRESPONDENT WHEN THE LATTER, COMMENTING ON INDIA'S ROLE IN THE 1971 BREAKAWAY OF EAST PAKISTAN, ASKED DESAI ABOUT INDIAN DESIGNS ON THE PUNJAB AND THE SIND. DESAI EXPLODED, RETORTING:
(1) THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE STATE BUILT PRINCIPALLY ON MUSLIM
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UNITY WAS RIDICULOUS FROM THE START (HE ASKED RHETORICALLY, "WHY DOESN'T ALL OF LATIN AMERICA COME UNDER THE RULE OF THE POPE?"); (2) INDIA WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE PUNJAB OR THE SIND, EVEN IF THEY APPLIED FOR ANNEXATION (ACCORDING TO SINGH, DESAI SAID, "I WOULD TELL THEM TO GO TO HELL.")

2. COMMENT: THIS EMBASSY HAS FOUND SINGH AN ASTUTE, SHREWD, WELL-INFORMED JUDGE OF THE AFGHAN SCENE. WE HAVE NO REASON TO SHARE HIS SUSPICIONS ABOUT CHINESE INVOLVEMENT IN BADAKHSHAN, HOWEVER.
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